



Chad Wollenberg &lt;chad.wollenberg@southside.edu&gt;

## HR Concerns

7 messages

**Charletta Barringer** <charletta.barringer@southside.edu>  
 To: Chad Wollenberg <chad.wollenberg@southside.edu>  
 Cc: Theresa Henderson <theresa.henderson@southside.edu>

Wed, May 17, 2023 at 12:09 AM

Greetings Mr. Wollenberg,

**EXHIBIT**  
**3**

You (Wollenberg) called for a meeting with me on May 3, 2023 regarding concerns that were brought to your attention by Mary Downing-Gardner (English-Assistant Professor). At this meeting you provided me with (in-hand) documents. These documents have been attached to this e-mail correspondence. There are several concerns that I have pertaining to these documents.

First, I am struck by the nature and description of actions, behaviors, and events that I have been accused as to have been involved with or have any knowledge of. It appears in these documents as though the alleged statements are presented as fact without any substantiated or documented evidence of fact or record. In addition, during the meeting that I held with both you (Wollenberg) and Mary Downing-Gardner it was demonstrated that the allegations made against me were in fact unfounded. In addition, it is curious to note that Downing-Gardner did not address any such concerns until after March 28, 2023. This interestingly corresponds with an email that I (her immediate supervisor) sent to Downing-Gardner requesting to discuss unsatisfactory work performance, student complaints, and other faculty expectations at SVCC.

The grievances listed in the documents you (Wollenberg) provided were discussed in this meeting. The allegations were as follows:

1. That I have looked at her personnel files and made comments about her having previously been in rehab. I stated at this meeting that I had never seen her personnel files and that this could not be done without me requesting Human Resources for these files. I pointed out that there was no record of such a request by me nor any evidence presented by Mary Downing-Gardner that could substantiate her claims. In fact, at no point had I been made aware of any ADA claims by Downing-Gardner.
2. The documents also stated that I had engaged in retaliatory measures. This was also discussed between all parties at this meeting. At this meeting, I clearly stated that I had advised all (HSB) faculty via email with copies to Keith Harkins and Stephen Walker that (directly quoted from email) "As we strive to build transparent lines of positive communication, any issues and or concerns must be shared between you and your dean so that all parties have a clear understanding of any and all expectations that have been communicated. Building a positive working relationship with your dean will only serve to strengthen the HSB unit, as a whole. To avoid circumvention of the dean, and following protocol please make sure that you have communicated with your dean and have addressed your concerns with her. Also, after addressing your questions and or concerns allow the dean time to respond to the issues that have or may be raised before contacting others outside of the HSB such as SVCC faculty senate representatives and or senior level administration". It was further discussed at this meeting that at no point had I told anyone that they could not address their concerns with those above me or to HR. (Email dated March 2, 2023- Protocol and Positive/Transparent Communication (HSB). At no point was any proof given that any retaliatory actions were taken against Downing-Gardner. In addition, Downing-Gardner asserted that she felt uncomfortable around me. At the meeting, I pointed out that my interactions with Downing-Gardner had been limited to brief hellos and how are you in passing at work and through emails. At no point did Downing-Gardner respond to my email from March 28<sup>th</sup>. Downing-Gardner had not visited either of my (Barringer-Brown) campus offices prior to May 11, 2023 (1:45 PM-Christanna). I further mentioned that I did not know why Downing-Gardner had a level of uncomfortability with me or that this had reached such a level that she mentioned that she has searched the Internet to review information that pertains to me prior to my employment start date with SVCC and most recently. Downing-Gardner stated that it was from these online reviews that she had determined that I was a good person. I

never got any description of what could have caused any level of discomfort outside of the email that was sent on March 28, 2023. Downing-Gardner made these comments in front of you (Wollenberg), but no comments were made by you.

3. Moreover, it was demonstrated that there were no violations of ADA, FMLA, or HIPPA on my part (Barringer-Brown). In fact, Downing-Gardner had not made me aware of her request for an accommodation at the SVCC graduation until after I had spoken to you (Wollenberg) and others (Harkins). Her claims of ADA, FMLA, or HIPPA violation were not founded and or substantiated. Additionally, Downing-Gardner emailed me the morning of the graduation to report her intended absence from the event on Saturday, May 13, 2023, due to illness.
4. Given the nature of these unfounded allegations I would like a response stating that no documents have been placed in my personnel file pertaining to this incident. In addition, I have numerous concerns given the fact that her claims have been demonstrated as being unfounded. I am concerned that Downing-Gardner's uncomfortability may be related to immutable factors. Moreover, My (Barringer-Brown) statements have been ignored. I was asked for documentation to substantiate my claims (to prove my absence of fault). This is an attempt to defame my character. 1) a false statement purporting to be fact; 2) publication or communication of that statement to a third person; 3) fault amounting to at least negligence; and 4) damages, or some harm caused to the reputation of the person or entity who is the subject of the statement. It appears that this attempt to defame my character was done after March 28, 2023.

Lastly, I am greatly concerned by the alleged comments made by Mary Downing-Gardner and any others, as to how they have been presented to me from SVCC HR, as factual (quote "Talk to her about the "I ve....." Word used "Retaliation".....(in-hand document-Wollenberg). I (Barringer-Brown) do not feel "safe" or "protected" in any way from this attempt of "abuse", "harassment" "defamation of character", and the creation of a "hostile work environment" to avoid discussion of the actual issues of unsatisfactory work performance. This lack of protection has made me "feel as though I am at the mercy of faculty members and any others who wish to add baseless distractions to the request to review faculty work performance expectations or other related issues within the academic unit of HSB at SVCC". The alleged claims that were made against me (Barringer-Brown) are unethical and without any documented or substantiated proof of facts. These are unethical and slanderous acts that may be further considered as an attempt to defame my character with malicious intent.

Sincerely,

Charletta H. Barringer-Brown, Ph.D., Ed.D.  
 Dean and Professor of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Business  
 Southside Virginia Community College  
 109 Campus Drive, Alberta, VA 23821  
 200 Daniel Road, Keysville, VA 23947  
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"2023 Recipient of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Outstanding Faculty Award (OFA) (Political Science) Virginia State University-Nominating Institution"

"Always remember that you are absolutely unique just like everyone else"-Margaret Mead



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**Chad Wollenberg** <chad.wollenberg@southside.edu>  
 To: Donna Morris <dmorris@vccs.edu>  
 Cc: Shannon Feinman <shannon.feinman@southside.edu>

Wed, May 17, 2023 at 6:49 AM

Morning,

And here I thought we'd not have much to talk about today. See you at 9.

Chad Wollenberg  
Interim Associate Vice President of Finance and Administration

**Southside Virginia Community College**

(434) 949-1033

<http://southside.edu>

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**Chad Wollenberg** <chad.wollenberg@southside.edu>

Wed, May 17, 2023 at 6:57 AM

To: Keith Harkins <keith.harkins@southside.edu>, Quentin Johnson <quentin.johnson@southside.edu>, Shannon Feinman <shannon.feinman@southside.edu>

Good Morning,

Please be aware that I'm meeting with the system office HR consultant this morning about this email. I will draft a response, but a larger meeting about this will be warranted. Theresa and I have met with Dr. BB, and I've met with her and Mary Downing. This is a complete 180 from the outcomes of those meetings.

Chad Wollenberg  
Interim Associate Vice President of Finance and Administration

**Southside Virginia Community College**

(434) 949-1033

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Charletta Barringer** <charletta.barringer@southside.edu>

Date: Wed, May 17, 2023 at 12:09 AM

Subject: HR Concerns

To: Chad Wollenberg <chad.wollenberg@southside.edu>

Cc: Theresa Henderson <theresa.henderson@southside.edu>

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**Shannon Feinman** <shannon.feinman@southside.edu>

Wed, May 17, 2023 at 1:32 PM

To: Charletta Barringer <charletta.barringer-brown@southside.edu>

Cc: Chad Wollenberg <chad.wollenberg@southside.edu>, Theresa Henderson <theresa.henderson@southside.edu>

Dear Dr. Barringer-Brown,

Mr. Wollenberg provided me with your email below. I acknowledge receipt of your email and am letting you know it is under review. Thank you.

**Shannon Vassar Feinman**

**Vice-President of Finance and Administration**

Southside Virginia Community College

434.949.1005

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